

ABSTRACT

THESIS: An Analysis of Changing Gender Relationships in Kuwait: Empowering Kuwaiti Women in Social and Political Contexts

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In this study, I focus on the changing gender relationships between women and men and on women's political rights in Kuwaiti society in particular. Specifically, I measure Kuwaiti citizens' attitudes toward Kuwaiti women in political roles after Kuwaiti women gained their political rights, especially after May 16, 2005. Gender relationships continue to change, and in order to understand these changes it is important to examine the current cultural context in which they are occurring. This context includes political change, cultural development, the impact of the media and economic systems, as well as changing laws, religions, socialization, and globalization. All of these factors influence gender relations in Kuwaiti society. This study focuses specifically on the way that political ideology and perceptions about gender roles impact attitudes toward political efficacy for women in Kuwait. This study focuses on Kuwaiti citizens' attitudes and perceptions about women's political rights and changing gender relationships in Kuwaiti society. The study uses survey data based on a random sampling of students at Kuwait University, along with the snowball technique for the general population, taken from Kuwaiti employees in public businesses. The data measure the attitudes of both of these populations towards Kuwaiti women's political rights.